

BEWARE OF UNSCRIPTURAL YOUTH MINISTRY PHILOSOPHIES

May 7, 2001 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org) - The following is from The Fundamentalist Digest, December 2000, edited by Don Jasmin [P.O. Box 2322, Elkton, MD 21922. 410-392-4569] --

Beware of Christian publishing houses which are publishing curriculums for young people that embrace liberal humanistic methods and pawn them off on “unsuspecting” teens under the guise of Christian education. These curriculums reverse the biblically constituted authority of the teacher-student in the learning process. The teacher becomes only a “facilitator” and Bible memorization is de-emphasized. In the July 2000 Lion of Judah, Audrey McKeever exposes the dangerous subtle changes taking place in several youth curriculums. McKeever cites the following companies:

GROUP PUBLISHING, Inc. According to McKeever, Thomas Schultz, “founder and President of Group Publishing, Inc.” heads “one of the fastest growing publishers of curricula for Christian youth.” Schultz views memorization as “one of those hand-me-down goals that few ever stop to analyze ... a practice that has been done for so long that no one ever dares to question its validity.”

YOUTH SPECIALTIES (ZONDERVAN): “Discourage the group from thinking of you as the ‘authority’ on the subject. ... Remember, with teenagers, your opinions will carry more weight the less of an authority figure you appear to be. ... Keep your mouth shut except when you are encouraging others to talk. You are a facilitator.” Facilitators “are to be seen as just another member of the group.” McKeever declares that Youth Specialties “informs youth leaders that teens need to know they can share what they are thinking, no matter how unpopular or wild their ideas might be.” Thus the facilitators must “affirm even those comments that seem like heresy to you.”

GOSPEL LIGHT: “Youth gain a new respect for leaders when the students are allowed to tell the leaders what to do.”

DAVID C. COOK PUBLISHERS: “(Teens) learn from relationships, not memory verses.” McKeever contends that “upon reviewing contemporary curricula, it rapidly becomes apparent that memorization and knowledge of Scripture often is in competition with building relationships within a group.”

McKeever believes that these so-called Christian youth publishers have adopted much of the humanistic Outcome Based Education (OBE) philosophy. Based on

McKeever's article, the writer agrees. Fundamentalists should "beware" and be wise."

Despite the concessions and departures of New-Evangelical publishers, young people need more than ever to be indoctrinated with the written words of Scripture (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15,16). God's Word gives light to young people in this sin darkened age (Ps. 119:9,105). When young people properly apprehend, correctly divide and appropriately apply "the word of truth," they experience approval by God (2 Tim. 2:15). While the Holy Spirit is the great teacher (John 16:13), He utilizes authoritative human figures (parents -- Eph. 6:4; pastors -- Eph. 4:11,12; pedagogues -- Acts 11:26) to accomplish His instructional endeavors.